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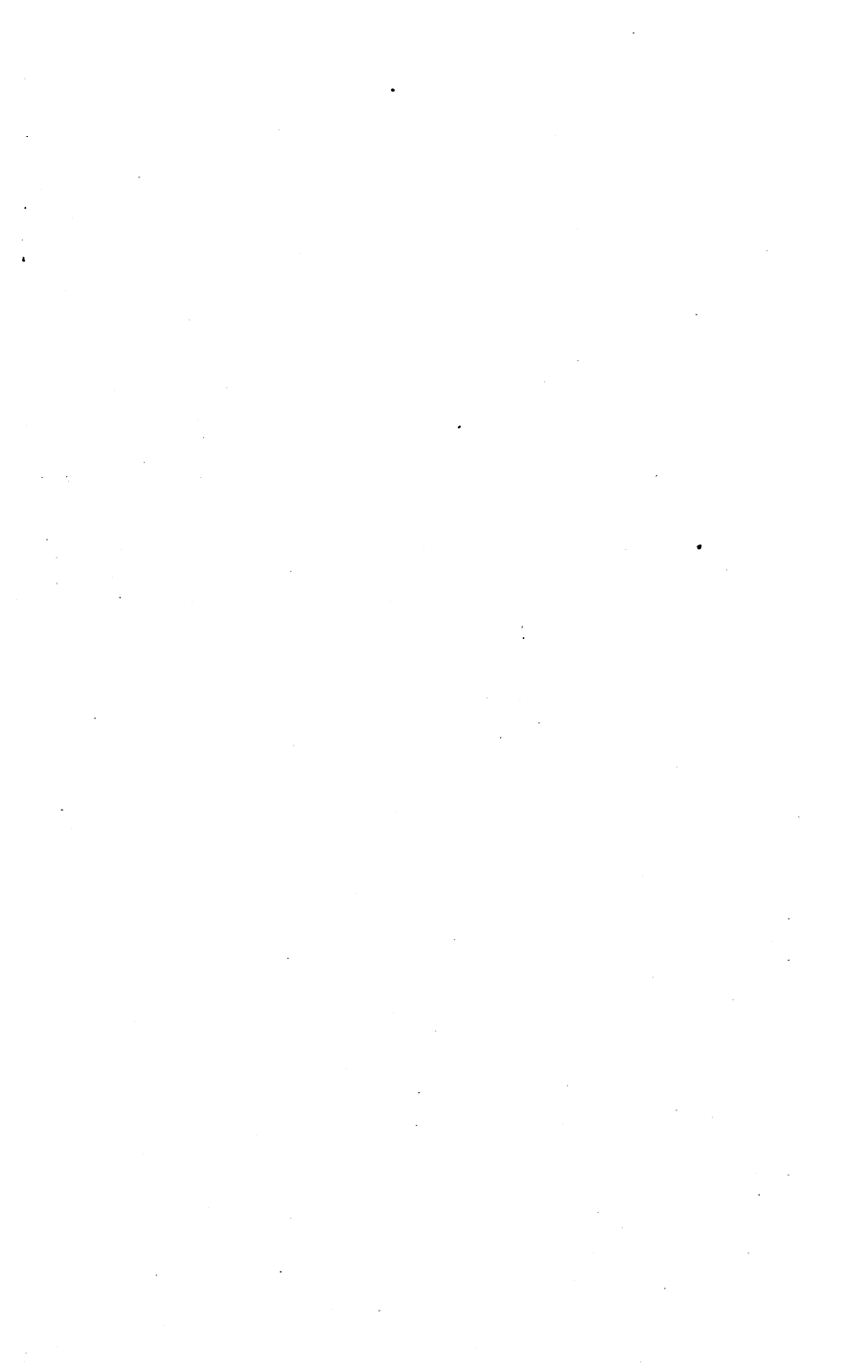
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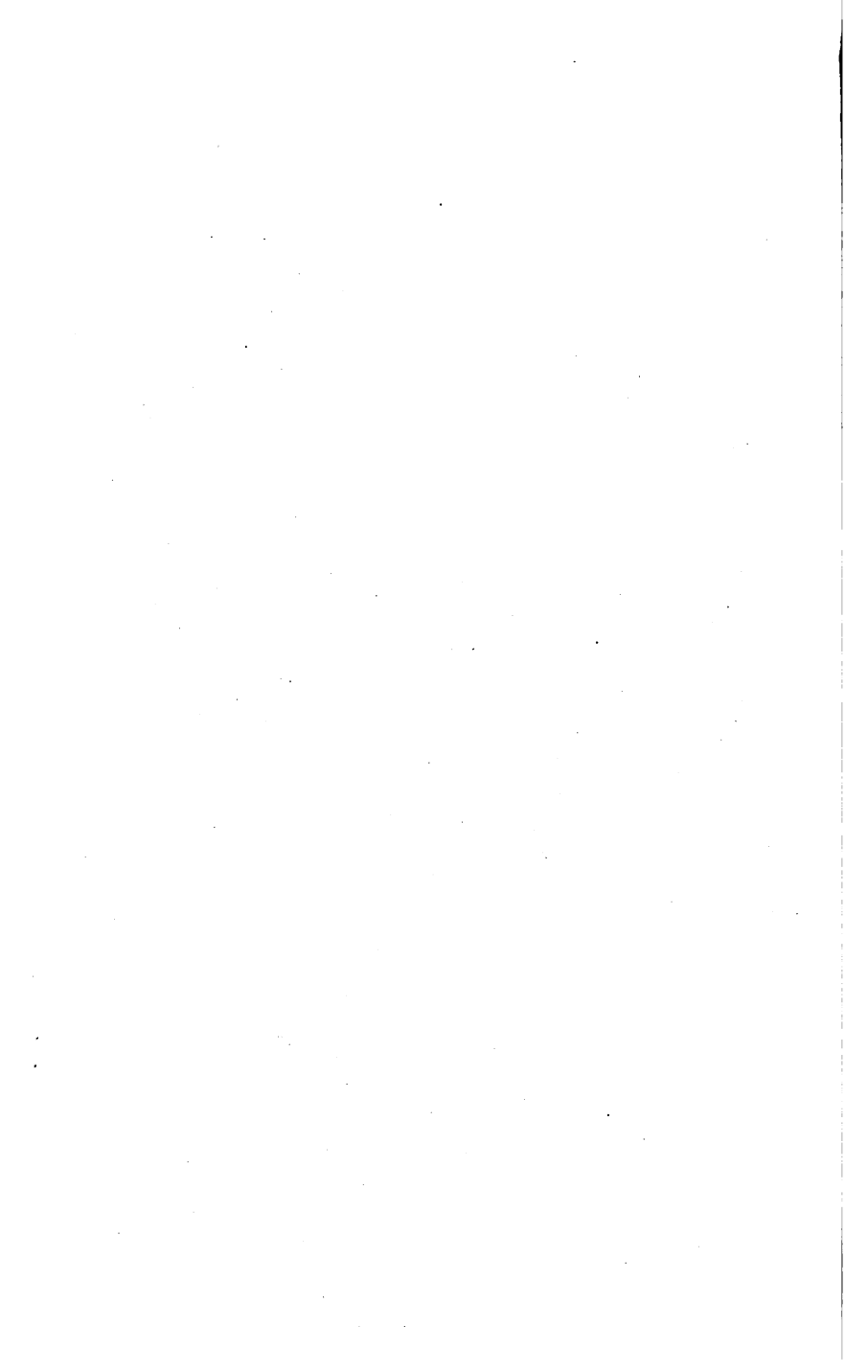
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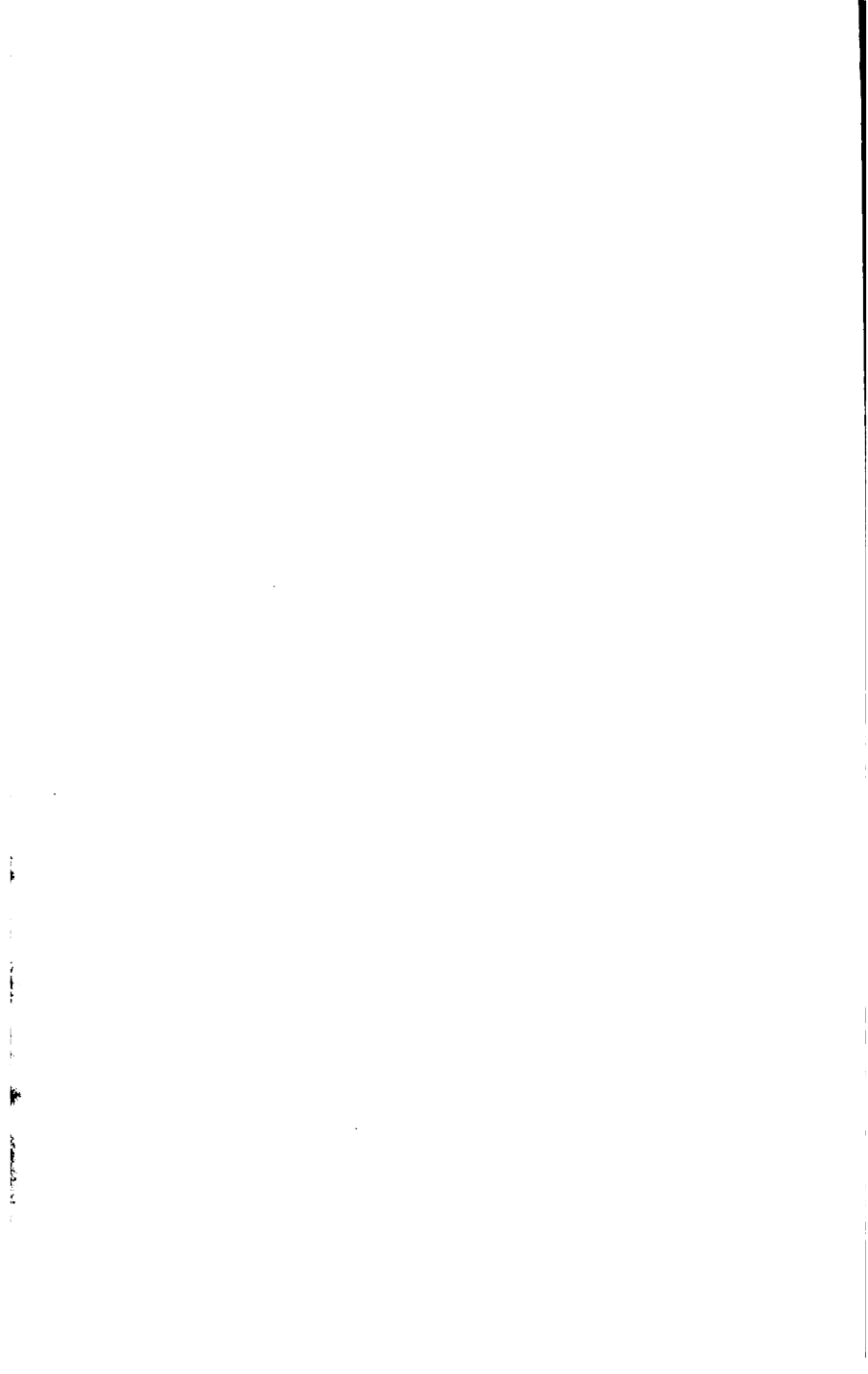
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O . H E N R Y A N A

SEVEN ODDS AND ENDS
POETRY AND SHORT STORIES

BY
O. HENRY



GARDEN CITY NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY

1920

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Register Frank

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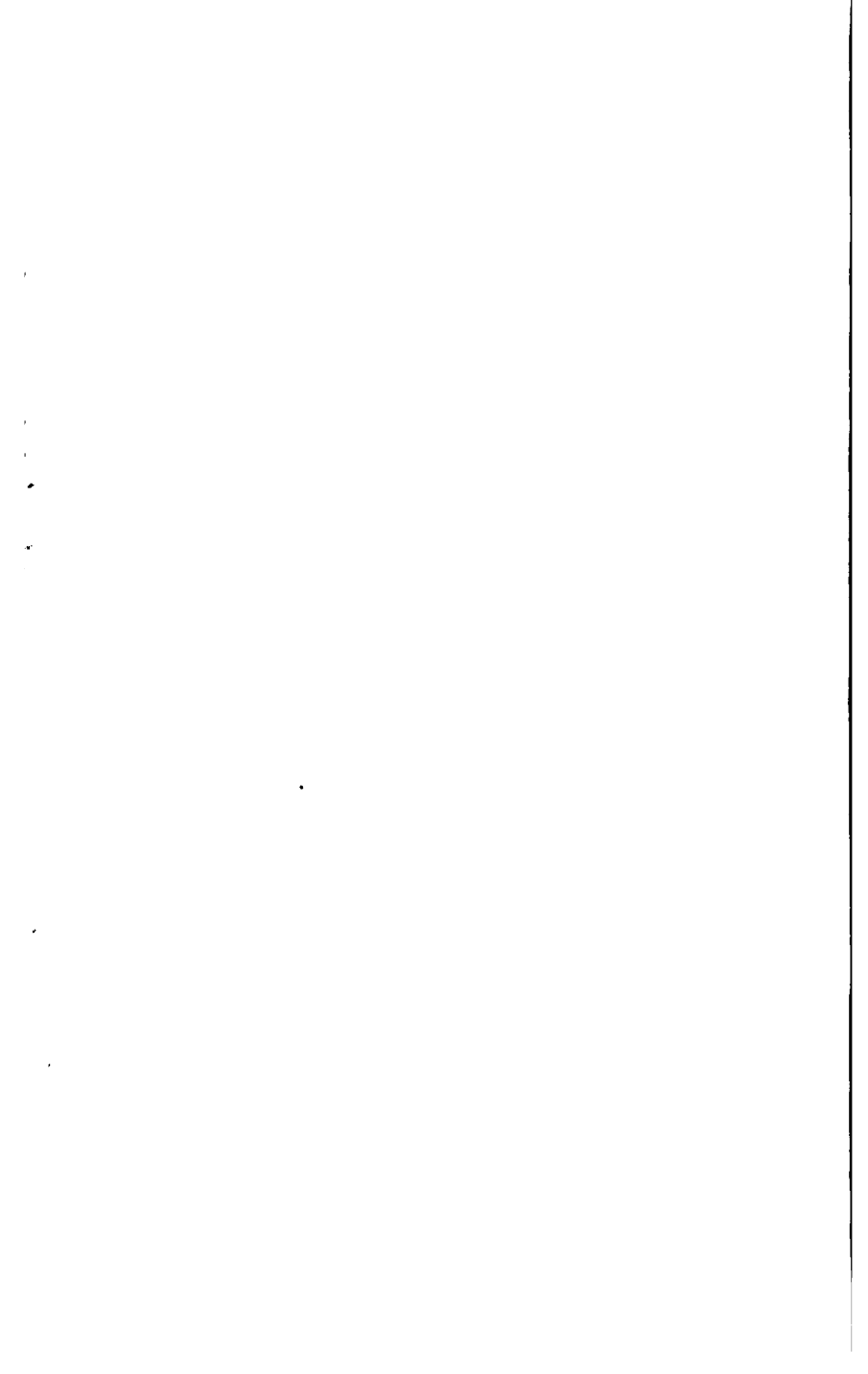
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O . H E N R Y
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THE CRUCIBLE

HARD ye may be in the tumult,
Red to your battle hilts,
Blow give for blow in the foray,
Cunningly ride in the tilts;
But when the roaring is ended,
Tenderly, unbeguiled,
Turn to a woman a woman's
Heart, and a child's to a child.

Test of the man, if his worth be
In accord with the ultimate plan,
That he be not, to his marring,
Always and utterly man;
That he bring out of the tumult,
Fitter and undefiled,
To a woman the heart of a woman,
To children the heart of a child.

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Good when the bugles are ranting
 It is to be iron and fire;
Good to be oak in the foray,
 Ice to a guilty desire.
But when the battle is over
 (Marvel and wonder the while)
Give to a woman a woman's
 Heart, and a child's to a child.

A L U N A R E P I S O D E

THE scene was one of supernatural weirdness. Tall, fantastic mountains reared their seamed peaks over a dreary waste of igneous rock and burned-out lava beds. Deep lakes of black water stood motionless as glass under frowning, honey-combed crags, from which ever and anon dropped crumbled masses with a sullen plunge. Vegetation there was none. Bitter cold reigned and ridges of black and shapeless rocks cut the horizon on all sides. An extinct volcano loomed against a purple sky, black as night and old as the world.

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The firmament was studded with immense stars that shone with a wan and spectral light. Orion's belt hung high above.

Aldebaran faintly shone millions of miles away, and the earth gleamed like a new-risen moon with a lurid, blood-like glow.

On a lofty mountain that hung toppling above an ink-black sea stood a dwelling built of stone. From its solitary window came a bright light that gleamed upon the misshapen rocks. The door opened and two men emerged locked in a deadly struggle.

They swayed and twisted upon the edge of the precipice, now one gaining the advantage, now the other.

Strong men they were, and stone rolled from their feet into the valley as each strove to overcome the other.

At length one prevailed. He

A LUNAR EPISODE

seized his opponent, and raising him high above his head, hurled him into space.

The vanquished combatant shot through the air like a stone from a catapult in the direction of the luminous earth.

"That's three of 'em this week," said the Man in the Moon as he lit a cigarette and turned back into the house. "Those New York interviewers are going to make me tired if they keep this thing up much longer."

THREE PARAGRAPHS

COPY," yelled the small boy at the door. The sick woman lying on the bed began to move her fingers aimlessly upon the worn counterpane. Her eyes were bright with fever; her face, once beautiful, was thin and pain drawn. She was dying, but neither she nor the man who held her hand and wrote on a paper tablet knew that the end was so near.

Three paragraphs were lacking to fill the column of humorous matter that the foreman had sent for. The small pay it brought them barely furnished shelter and food. Medicine was lacking but the need for that was nearly over.

THREE PARAGRAPHS

The woman's mind was wandering; she spoke quickly and unceasingly, and the man bit his pencil and stared at the pad of paper, holding her slim, hot hand.

"Oh, Jack; Jack, papa says no, I cannot go with you. Not love you! Jack, do you want to break my heart? Oh, look, look! the fields are like heaven, so filled with flowers. Why have you no ice? I had ice when I was at home. Can't you give me just a little piece, my throat is burning?"

The humourist wrote: "When a man puts a piece of ice down a girl's back at a picnic, does he give her the cold shoulder?"

The woman feverishly put back the loose masses of brown hair from her burning face.

"Jack, Jack, I don't want to die! Who is that climbing in the window?"

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Oh, it's only Jack, and here is Jack holding my hand, too. How funny! We are going to the river to-night. The quiet, broad, dark, whispering river. Hold my hand tight, Jack, I can feel the water coming in. It is so cold. How queer it seems to be dead, dead, and see the trees above you."

The humourist wrote: "On the dead square—a cemetery lot."

"Copy, sir," yelled the small boy again. "Forms locked in half an hour."

The man bit his pencil into splinters. The hand he held was growing cooler; surely her fever must be leaving. She was singing now, a little crooning song she might have learned at her mother's knee, and her fingers had ceased moving.

"They told me," she said weakly and sadly, "that hardships and suf-

THREE PARAGRAPHS

fering would come upon me for disobeying my parents and marrying Jack. Oh, dear, my head aches so I can't think. No, no, the white dress with the lace sleeves, not that black, dreadful thing! Sailing, sailing, sailing, where does this river go? You are not Jack, you are too cold and stern. What is that red mark on your brow? Come, sister, let's make some daisy chains and then hurry home, there is a great black cloud above us—I'll be better in the morning, Jack, if you'll hold my hand tight. Jack, I feel as light as a feather—I'm just floating, floating, right into the cloud and I can't feel your hand. Oh, I see her now, and there is the old love and tenderness in her face. I must go to her, Jack. Mother, mother!

The man wrote quickly:

"A woman generally likes her hus-

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band's mother-in-law the best of all his relatives."

Then he sprang to the door, dashed the column of copy into the boy's hand, and moved swiftly to the bed.

He put his arm softly under the brown head that had suffered so much, but it turned heavily aside.

The fever was gone. The humourist was alone.

BULGER'S FRIEND

IT WAS rare sport for a certain element in the town when old Bulger joined the Salvation Army. Bulger was the town's odd "character," a shiftless, eccentric old man, and a natural foe to social conventions. He lived on the bank of a brook that bisected the town, in a wonderful hut of his own contriving, made of scrap lumber, clapboards, pieces of tin, canvas and corrugated iron.

The most adventurous boys circled Bulger's residence at a respectful distance. He was intolerant of visitors, and repelled the curious with belligerent and gruff inhospitality.

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In return, the report was current that he was of unsound mind, something of a wizard, and a miser with a vast amount of gold buried in or near his hut. The old man worked at odd jobs, such as weeding gardens and whitewashing; and he collected old bones, scrap metal and bottles from alleys and yards.

One rainy night when the Salvation Army was holding a slenderly attended meeting in its hall, Bulger had appeared and asked permission to join the ranks. The sergeant in command of the post welcomed the old man with that cheerful lack of prejudice that distinguishes the peaceful militants of his order.

Bulger was at once assigned to the position of bass drummer, to his evident, although grimly expressed, joy. Possibly the sergeant, who had the success of his command at heart,

BULGER'S FRIEND

perceived that it would be no mean token of successful warfare to have the new recruit thus prominently displayed, representing, as he did, if not a brand from the burning, at least a well-charred and sap-dried chunk.

So every night, when the Army marched from its quarters to the street corner where open-air services were held, Bulger stumbled along with his bass drum behind the sergeant and the corporal, who played "Sweet By and By" and "Only an Armor-Bearer" in unison upon their cornets. And never before in that town was bass drum so soundly whacked. Bulger managed to keep time with the cornets upon his instrument, but his feet were always woefully unrhythmic. He shuffled and staggered and rocked from side to side like a bear.

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Truly, he was not pleasing to the sight. He was a bent, ungainly old man, with a face screwed to one side and wrinkled like a dry prune. The red shirt, which proclaimed his enlistment into the ranks, was a misfit, being the outer husk of a leviathan corporal who had died some time before. This garment hung upon Bulger in folds. His old brown cap was always pulled down over one eye. These and his wabbling gait gave him the appearance of some great simian, captured and imperfectly educated in pedestrian and musical manœuvres.

The thoughtless boys and undeveloped men who gathered about the street services of the Army badgered Bulger incessantly. They called upon him to give oral testimony to his conversion, and criticized the technique and style of his

BULGER'S FRIEND

drum performance. But the old man paid no attention whatever to their jeers. He rarely spoke to any one except when, on coming and going, he gruffly saluted his comrades.

The sergeant had met many odd characters, and knew how to study them. He allowed the recruit to have his own silent way for a time. Every evening Bulger appeared at the hall, marched up the street with the squad and back again. Then he would place his drum in the corner where it belonged, and sit upon the last bench in the rear until the hall meeting was concluded.

But one night the sergeant followed the old man outside, and laid his hand upon his shoulder. "Comrade," he said, "is it well with you?"

"Not yet, sergeant," said Bulger. "I'm only tryin'. I'm glad you come

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outside. I've been wantin' to ask you: Do you believe the Lord would take a man in if he come to Him late like—kind of a last resort, you know? Say a man who'd lost everything—home and property and friends and health. Wouldn't it look mean to wait till then and try to come?"

"Bless His name—no!" said the sergeant. "Come ye that are heavy laden; that's what He says. The poorer, the more miserable, the more unfortunate—the greater His love and forgiveness."

"Yes, I'm poor," said Bulger. "Awful poor and miserable. You know when I can think best, sergeant? It's when I'm beating the drum. Other times there's a kind of muddled roarin' in my head. The drum seems to kind of soothe and calm it. There's a thing I'm tryin' to study out, but I ain't made it yet."

BULGER'S FRIEND

"Do you pray, comrade?" asked the sergeant.

"No, I don't," said Bulger. "What'd be the use? I know where the hitch is. Don't it say somewhere for a man to give up his own family or friends and serve the Lord?"

"If they stand in his way; not otherwise."

"I've got no family," continued the old man, "nor no friends—but one. And that one is what's driven me to ruin."

"Free yourself!" cried the sergeant. "He is no friend, but an enemy who stands between you and salvation."

"No," answered Bulger, emphatically, "no enemy. The best friend I ever had."

"But you say he's driven you to ruin!"

The old man chuckled dryly:

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"And keeps me in rags and livin' on scraps and sleepin' like a dog in a patched-up kennel. And yet I never had a better friend. You don't understand, sergeant. You lose all your friends but the best one, and then you'll know how to hold on to the last one."

"Do you drink, comrade?" asked the sergeant.

"Not a drop in twenty years," Bulger replied. The sergeant was puzzled.

"If this friend stands between you and your soul's peace, give him up," was all he could find to say.

"I can't—now," said the old man, dropping into a fretful whine. "But you just let me keep on beating the drum, sergeant, and maybe I will some time. I'm a-tryin'. Sometimes I come so near thinkin' it out that a dozen more licks on the drum

BULGER'S FRIEND

would settle it. I get mighty nigh to the point, and then I have to quit. You'll give me more time, won't you, sergeant?"

"All you want, and God bless you, comrade. Pound away until you hit the right note."

Afterward the sergeant would often call to Bulger: "Time, comrade! Knocked that friend of yours out yet?" The answer was always unsatisfactory.

One night at a street corner the sergeant prayed loudly that a certain struggling comrade might be parted from an enemy who was leading him astray under the guise of friendship. Bulger, in sudden and plainly evident alarm, immediately turned his drum over to a fellow volunteer, and shuffled rapidly away down the street. The next night he was back again at his post, without any

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explanation of his strange behaviour.

The sergeant wondered what it all meant, and took occasion to question the old man more closely as to the influence that was retarding the peace his soul seemed to crave. But Bulger carefully avoided particularizing.

"It's my own fight," he said. "I've got to think it out myself. Nobody else don't understand."

The winter of 1892 was a memorable one in the South. The cold was almost unprecedented, and snow fell many inches deep where it had rarely whitened the ground before. Much suffering resulted among the poor, who had not anticipated the rigorous season. The little squad of Salvationists found more distress than they could relieve.

Charity in that town, while swift

BULGER'S FRIEND

and liberal, lacked organization. Want, in that balmy and productive climate, existed only in sporadic cases, and these were nearly always quietly relieved by generous neighbours. But when some sudden disastrous onslaught of the elements—storm, fire or flood—occurred, the impoverished sufferers were often too slowly aided because system was lacking, and because charity was called upon too seldom to become a habit. At such times the Salvation Army was very useful. Its soldiers went down into alleys and byways to rescue those who, unused to extreme want, had never learned to beg.

At the end of three weeks of hard freezing a level foot of snow fell. Hunger and cold struck the improvident, and a hundred women, children and old men were gathered into the

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Army's quarters to be warmed and fed. Each day the blue-uniformed soldiers slipped in and out of the stores and offices of the town, gathering pennies and dimes and quarters to buy food for the starving. And in and out of private houses the Salvationists went with baskets of food and clothing, while day by day the mercury still crouched among the tens and twenties.

Alas! business, that scapegoat, was dull. The dimes and quarters came more reluctantly from tills that jingled not when they were opened. Yet in the big hall of the Army the stove was kept red-hot, and upon the long table, set in the rear, could always be found at least coffee and bread and cheese. The sergeant and the squad fought valiantly. At last the money on hand was all gone, and the daily collections were diminished

BULGER'S FRIEND

to a variable sum, inadequate to the needs of the dependents of the Army.

Christmas was near at hand. There were fifty children in the hall, and many more outside, to whom that season brought no joy beyond what was brought by the Army. None of these little pensioners had thus far lacked necessary comforts, and they had already begun to chatter of the tree—that one bright vision in the sober monotony of the year. Never since the Army first came had it failed to provide a tree and gifts for the children.

The sergeant was troubled. He knew that an announcement of “no tree” would grieve the hearts under those thin cotton dresses and ragged jackets more than would stress of storm or scanty diet; and yet there was not money enough to meet the daily demands for food and fuel.

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On the night of December the 20th the sergeant decided to announce that there could be no Christmas tree: it seemed unfair to allow the waxing anticipation of the children to reach too great a height.

The evening was colder, and the still deep snow was made deeper by another heavy fall swept upon the wings of a fierce and shrill-voiced northern gale. The sergeant, with sodden boots and reddened countenance, entered the hall at nightfall, and removed his threadbare overcoat. Soon afterward the rest of the faithful squad drifted in, the women heavily shawled, the men stamping their snow-cruste feet loudly upon the steep stairs. After the slender supper of cold meat, beans, bread, and coffee had been finished all joined in a short

BULGER'S FRIEND

service of song and prayer, according to their daily habit.

Far back in the shadow sat Bulger. For weeks his ears had been deprived of that aid to thought, the booming of the big bass drum. His wrinkled face wore an expression of gloomy perplexity. The Army had been too busy for the regular services and parades. The silent drum, the banners, and the cornets were stored in a little room at the top of the stairway.

Bulger came to the hall every night and ate supper with the others. In such weather work of the kind that the old man usually did was not to be had, and he was bidden to share the benefits conferred upon the other unfortunates. He always left early, and it was surmised that he passed the nights in his patchwork hut, that structure being waterproof and weathertight beyond the promise

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of its outward appearance. Of late the sergeant had had no time to bestow upon the old man.

At seven o'clock the sergeant stood up and rapped upon the table with a lump of coal. When the room became still he began his talk, that rambled off into a halting discourse quite unlike his usual positive and direct speeches. The children had gathered about their friend in a ragged, wriggling, and wide-a-wake circle. Most of them had seen that fresh, ruddy countenance of his emerge, at the twelve-stroke of a night of splendour, from the whiskered mask of a magnificent Santa Claus. They knew now that he was going to speak of the Christmas tree.

They tiptoed and listened, flushed with a hopeful and eager awe. The sergeant saw it, frowned, and swallowed hard. Continuing, he planted

BULGER'S FRIEND

the sting of disappointment in each expectant little bosom, and watched the light fade from their eyes.

There was to be no tree. Renunciation was no new thing to them; they had been born to it. Still a few little ones in whom hope died hard sobbed aloud, and wan, wretched mothers tried to hush and console them. A kind of voiceless wail went among them, scarcely a protest, rather the ghost of a lament for the childhood's pleasures they had never known. The sergeant sat down and figured cheerlessly with the stump of a pencil upon the blank border of a newspaper.

Bulger rose and shuffled out of the room without ceremony, as was his custom. He was heard fumbling in the little room in the hallway, and suddenly a thunderous roar broke out, filling the whole building with

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its booming din. The sergeant started, and then laughed as if his nerves welcomed the diversion.

"It's only Comrade Bulger," he said, "doing a little thinking in his own quiet way."

The norther rattled the windows and shrieked around the corners. The sergeant heaped more coal into the stove. The increase of that cutting wind bore the cold promise of days, perhaps weeks, of hard times to come. The children were slowly recovering the sad philosophy out of which the deceptive hope of one bright day had enticed them. The women were arranging things for the night; preparing to draw the long curtain across the width of the hall, separating the children's quarters and theirs from those of the men.

About eight o'clock the sergeant

BULGER'S FRIEND

had seen that all was shipshape; and was wrapping his woolen comforter around his neck, ready for his cold journey homeward, when footsteps were heard upon the stairway. The door opened, and Bulger came in covered with snow like Santa Claus, and as red of face, but otherwise much unlike the jolly Christmas saint.

The old man shambled down the hall to where the sergeant stood, drew a wet, earth-soiled bag from under his coat, and laid it upon the table. "Open it," he said, and motioned to the sergeant.

That cheery official obeyed with an indulgent smile. He seized the bottom of the bag, turned it up, and stood, with his smile turned to a gape of amazement, gazing at a heap of gold and silver coin that rolled upon the table.

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"Count it," said Bulger.

The jingling of the money and wonder at its source had produced a profound silence in the room. For a time nothing could be heard but the howling of the wind and the chink of the coins as the sergeant slowly laid them in little separate piles.

"Six hundred," said the sergeant, and stopped to clear his throat, "six hundred and twenty-three dollars and eighty-five cents!"

"Eighty," said Bulger. "Mistake of five cents. I've thought it out at last, sergeant, and I've give up that friend I told you about. That's him—dollars and cents. The boys was right when they said I was a miser. Take it, sergeant, and spend it the best way for them that needs it, not forgettin' a tree for the young 'uns, and——"

BULGER'S FRIEND

"Hallelujah!" cried the sergeant.

"And a new bass drum," concluded Bulger.

And then the sergeant made another speech.

A PROFESSIONAL SECRET

THE STORY OF A MAID MADE OVER

DR. SATTERFIELD PRINCE physician to the leisure class, looked at his watch. It indicated five minutes to twelve. At the stroke of the hour would expire the morning term set apart for the reception of his patients in his handsome office apartments. And then the young woman attendant ushered in from the waiting-room the last unit of the wealthy and fashionable gathering that had come to patronize his skill.

Dr. Prince turned, his watch still in hand, his manner courteous, but

A PROFESSIONAL SECRET

seeming to invite promptness and brevity in the interview. The last patient was a middle-aged lady, richly dressed, with an amiable and placid face. When she spoke her voice revealed the drawling, musical slur and intonation of the South. She had come, she leisurely explained, to bespeak the services of Dr. Prince in the case of her daughter, who was possessed of a most mysterious affliction. And then, femininely, she proceeded to exhaustively diagnose the affliction, informing the physician with a calm certitude of its origin and nature.

The diagnosis advanced by the lady—Mrs. Galloway Rankin—was one so marvelously strange and singular in its conception that Dr. Prince, accustomed as he was to the conceits and vagaries of wealthy malingerers, was actually dumfounded. The fol-

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lowing is the matter of Mrs. Rankin's statement, briefly reported:

She—Mrs. Rankin—was of an old Kentucky family, the Bealls. Between the Bealls and another historic house—the Rankins—had been waged for nearly a century one of the fiercest and most sanguinary feuds within the history of the State. Each generation had kept alive both the hate and the warfare, until at length it was said that Nature began to take cognizance of the sentiment and Bealls and Rankins were born upon earth as antagonistic toward each other as cats and dogs. So, for four generations the war had waged, and the mountains were dotted with tombstones of both families. At last, for lack of fuel to feed upon, the feud expired with only one direct descendant of the Bealls and one of the Rankins remaining—

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Evalina Beall, aged nineteen, and Galloway Rankin, aged twenty-five. The last mortal shot in the feud was fired by Cupid. The two survivors met, became immediately and mutually enamoured, and a miracle transpired on Kentucky soil—a Rankin wedded a Beall.

Interposed, and irrelevant to the story, was the information that coal mines had been discovered later on the Rankin lands, and now the Galloway Rankins were to be computed among the millionaires.

All that was long enough ago for there to be now a daughter, twenty years of age—Miss Annabel Rankin—for whose relief the services of Dr. Prince was petitioned.

Then followed, in Mrs. Rankin's statement, a description of the mysterious, though by her readily accounted for, affliction.

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It seemed that there was a peculiar difficulty in the young lady's powers of locomotion. In walking, a process requiring a coördination and unanimity of the functions—Dr. Prince, said Mrs. Rankin, would understand and admit the non-existence of a necessity for anatomical specification—there persisted a stubborn opposition, a most contrary and counteracting antagonism. In those successively progressive and generally unconsciously automatic movements necessary to proper locomotion, there was a violent lack of harmony and mutuality. To give an instance cited by Mrs. Rankin—if Miss Annabel desired to ascend a stairway, one foot would be easily advanced to the step above, but instead of aiding and abetting its fellow, the other would at once proceed to start downstairs. By a strong physical and

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mental effort the young lady could walk fairly well for a short distance but suddenly the rebellious entities would become uncontrollable, and she would be compelled to turn undesirable corners, to enter impossible doorways, to dance, shuffle, side-step and perform other undignified and distressing evolutions.

After setting forth these lamentable symptoms, Mrs. Rankin emphatically asserted her belief that the affliction was the result of heredity—of the union between the naturally opposing and contrary Beall and Rankin elements. She believed that the inherited spirit of the ancient feud had taken on physical manifestations, exhibiting them in the person of the unfortunate outcome of the union of opposites. That in Miss Annabel Rankin was warring the imperishable antipathy of the

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two families. In other words, that one of Miss Rankin's—that is to say, that when Miss Rankin took a step it was a Beall step, and the next one was dominated by the bequeathed opposition of the Rankins.

Doctor Prince received the communication with his usual grave, professional attention, and promised to call the next day at ten to inspect the patient.

Promptly at the hour his electric runabout turned into the line of stylish autos and hansoms that wait along the pavements before the most expensive hostelry on American soil.

When Miss Annabel Rankin entered the reception parlour of their choice suite of rooms Doctor Prince gave a little blink of surprise through his brilliantly polished nose glasses. The glow of perfect health and the contour of perfect beauty were

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visible in the face and form of the young lady. But admiration gave way to sympathy when he saw her walk. She entered at a little run, swayed, stepped off helplessly at a sharp tangent, advanced, marked time, backed off, recovered and sidled with a manœuvring rush to a couch, where she rested, with a look of serious melancholy upon her handsome face.

Dr. Prince proceeded with his interrogatories in the delicate, reassuring, gentlemanly manner that had brought him so many patrons who placed a value upon those amenities. Miss Annabel answered frankly and sensibly, indeed, for one of her years. The feud theory of Mrs. Rankin was freely discussed. The daughter also believed in it.

Soon the physician departed, promising to call again and administer

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treatment. Then he buzzed down the Avenue and four doors on an asphalted side street to the office of Dr. Grumbleton Myers, the great specialist in locomotor ataxia and nerve ailments. The two distinguished physicians shut themselves in a private office, and the great Myers dragged forth a decanter of sherry and a box of Havanas. When the consultation was over both shook their heads.

"Fact is," summed up Myers, "we don't know anything about anything. I'd say treat symptoms now until something turns up; but there are no symptoms."

"The feud diagnosis, then?" suggested Doctor Prince, archly, ridding his cigar of its ash.

"It's an interesting case," said the specialist, noncommittally.

"I say, Prince," called Myers, as

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his caller was leaving. "Er—sometimes, you know, children that fight and quarrel are shut in separate rooms. Doesn't it seem a pity, now, that bloomers aren't in fashion? By separ——"

"But they aren't," smiled Doctor Prince, "and we must be fashionable, at any rate."

Doctor Prince burned midnight oil—or its equivalent, a patent, electric, soft-shaded, midnight incandescent, over his case. With such little success did his light shine that he was forced to make a little speech to the Rankins full of scientific terms—a thing he conscientiously avoided with his patients—which shows that he was driven to expedient. At last he was reduced to suggest treatment by hypnotism.

Being crowded further, he advised it, and appeared another day with

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Professor Adami, the most reputable and non-advertising one he could find among that school of practitioners.

Miss Annabel, gentle and melancholy, fell an easy victim—or, I should say, subject—to the professor's influence. Previously instructed by Doctor Prince in the nature of the malady he was about to combat, the dealer in mental drugs proceeded to offer "suggestion" (in the language of his school) to the afflicted and unconscious young lady, impressing her mind with the conviction that her affliction was moonshine and her perambulatory powers without impairment.

When the spell was removed Miss Rankin sat up, looking a little bewildered at first, and then rose to her feet, walking straight across the room with the grace, the sureness and the ease of a Diana, a Leslie-

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Carter, or a Vassar basketball champion. Miss Annabel's sad face was now lit with hope and joy. Mrs. Rankin of Southern susceptibility wept a little, delightedly, upon a minute lace handkerchief. Miss Annabel continued to walk about firmly and accurately, in absolute control of the machinery necessary for her so to do. Doctor Prince quietly congratulated Professor Adami, and then stepped forward, smilingly rubbing his nose glasses with an air. His position enabled him to overshadow the hypnotizer who, contented to occupy the background temporarily, was busy estimating in his mind with how large a bill for services he would dare to embellish the occasion when he should come to the front.

Amid repeated expressions of gratitude, the two professional gentle-

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men made their adieus, a little elated at the success of the treatment which, with one of them, had been an experiment, with the other an exhibition.

As the door closed behind them, Miss Annabel, her usually serious and pensive temper somewhat enlivened by the occasion, sat at the piano and dashed into a stirring march. Outside, the two men moving toward the elevator heard a scream of alarm from her and hastened back. They found her on the piano-stool, with one hand still pressing the keys. The other arm was extended rigidly to its full length behind her, its fingers tightly clenched into a pink and pretty little fist. Her mother was bending over her, joining in the alarm and surprise. Miss Rankin rose from the stool, now quiet, but again depressed and sad.

"I don't know what did it,"

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she said, plaintively; "I began to play and that arm shot back. It wouldn't stay near the piano while the other one was there."

A ping-pong table stood in the room.

"A little game, Miss Rankin," cried Professor Adami, gayly, trying to feel his way.

They played. With the racquet in the refractory arm, Miss Annabel played in fine style. Her control of it was perfect. The professor laid down his racquet.

"Ah! a button is loose on my coat," said he. "Such is the fate of sorrowful bachelors. A needle and thread, now, Miss Rankin?"

A little surprised, but smiling acquiescence, Annabel brought the articles from another room.

"Now thread the needle, if you please," said Professor Adami.

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Annabel bit off two feet of the black silk. When she came to thread the needle the secret was out. As the hand presenting the thread approached the other holding the needle that arm was jerked violently away. Doctor Prince was first to reduce the painful discovery to words.

"Dear Miss and Mrs. Rankin," he said, in his most musical consolation-baritone, "we have been only partially successful. The affliction, Miss Rankin, has passed from your—that is, the affliction is now in your arms."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Annabel, "I've a Beall arm and a Rankin arm, then. Well, I can use one hand at a time, anyway. People won't notice it as they did before. Oh, what an annoyance those feuds were, to be sure! It seems to me they should make laws against them."

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Doctor Prince looked inquiringly at Professor Adami. That gentleman shook his head. "Another day," he said. "I prefer not to establish the condition at a lesser interval than two or three days."

So, three days afterward they returned, and the professor replaced Miss Rankin under control. This time there was, apparently, perfect success. She came forth from the trance, and with full muscular powers. She walked the floor with a sure, rhythmic step. She played several difficult selections upon the piano, the hands and arms moving with propriety and with allied ease. Miss Rankin seemed at last to possess a perfectly well-ordered physical being as well as a very grateful mental one.

A week afterward there wafted into Doctor Prince's office a youth,

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generously gilded. The hallmarks of society were deeply writ upon him.

"I'm Ashburton," he explained; "T. Ripley Ashburton, you know. I'm engaged to Miss Rankin. I understand you've been training her for some breaks in her gaits—" T. Ripley Ashburton caught himself. "Didn't mean that, you know—slipped out—been loafing around stables quite a lot. I say, Doctor Prince, I want you to tell me. Candidly, you know. I'm awful spoons on Miss Rankin. We're to be married in the Fall. You might consider me one of the family, you know. They told me about the treatment you gave her with the—er—medium fellow. That set her up wonderfully, I assure you. She goes freely now, and handles her fore—I mean you know, she's over all that old trouble. But there's something else

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started up that's making the track pretty heavy; so I called, don't you understand."

"I had not been advised," said Doctor Prince, "of any recurrence of Miss Rankin's indisposition."

T. Ripley Ashburton produced a silver cigarette-case and contemplated it tenderly. Receiving no encouragement, he replaced it in his pocket with a sigh.

"Not a recurrence," he said, thoughtfully, "but something different. Possibly I'm the only one in a position to know. Hate to discuss it—reveal Cupid's secrets, you know—such a jolly low thing to do—but suppose the occasion justifies it."

"If you possess any information or have observed anything," said Doctor Prince, judicially, "through which Miss Rankin's condition might be benefited, it is your duty, of

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course, to apply it in her behalf. I need hardly remind you that such disclosures are held as secrets on professional honour."

"I believe I mentioned," said Mr. Ashburton, his fingers still hovering around the pocket containing his cigarette case, "that Miss Rankin and I are ever so sweet upon each other. She's a jolly, swell girl, if she did come from the Kentucky mountains. Lately she's acted awful queerly. She's awful affectionate one minute, and the next she turns me down like a perfect stranger. Last night I called at the hotel, and she met me at the door of their rooms. Nobody was in sight, and she gave me an awful nice kiss—er—engaged, you know, Doctor Prince—and then she fired away and gave me an awful hard slap in the face. 'I hate the sight of you,' she said;

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'how dare you take the liberty!'" Mr. Ashburton drew an envelope from his pocket and extracted from it a sheet of note paper of a delicate heliotrope tint. "You might read this note, you know. Can't say if it's a medical case, 'pon my honour, but I'm awfully queered, don't you understand."

Doctor Prince read the following lines:

MY DEAREST RIPLEY:

Do come around this evening—there's a dear boy—and take me out somewhere. Mamma has a headache, and says she'll be glad to be rid of both of us for a while. 'Twas so sweet of you to send those pond lilies—they're just what I wanted for the east windows. You darling boy—you're so thoughtful and good—I'm sure you're worth all the love of

Your very own

ANNABEL.

P. S.—On second thoughts, I will ask you not to call this evening, as I shall be

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otherwise engaged. Perhaps it has never occurred to you that there may be two opinions about the vast pleasure you seem to think your society affords others. Clothes and the small talk of club-houses and race-tracks hardly ever succeed in making a man without other accessories.

Very respectfully,
ANNABEL RANKIN.

Being deprived of the aid of his consolation cylinders, T. Ripley Ashburton sat, gloomy, revolving things in his mind.

"Ah!" exclaimed Doctor Prince, aloud, but addressing the exclamation to himself; "driven from the arms to the heart!" He perceived that the mysterious hereditary contrariety had, indeed, taken up its lodging in that tender organ of the afflicted maiden.

The gilded youth was dismissed, with the promise that Doctor Prince

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would make a professional call upon Miss Rankin. He did so soon, in company with Professor Adami, after they had discussed the strange course taken by this annoying heritage of the Bealls and Rankins. This time, as the location of the disorder required that the subject be approached with ingenuity, some diplomacy was exercised before the young lady could be induced to submit herself to the professor's art. But evidently she did so, and emerged from the trance as usual without a trace of unpleasant effect.

With much interest and some anxiety Doctor Prince passed several days awaiting the report of Mr. Ashburton, who, indeed, of all others would have to be depended upon to observe improvements, if any had occurred. One morning that youth dropped in, jubilant.

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"It's all right, you know," he declared, cheerfully. "Miss Rankin's herself again. She's as sweet as cream, and the trouble's all off. Never a cross word or look. I'm her ducky, all right. She won't believe what I tell her about the way she used to treat me. Intimates I make up the stories. But it's all right now—everything's running on rubber tires. Awfully obliged to you and the old boy—er—the medium, you know. And I say, now, Doctor Prince, there's a wonderful improvement in Miss Rankin in every way. She used to be rather stiff, don't you understand—sort of superior, in a way—bookish, and a habit of thinking things, you know. Well, she's cured all round—she's a topper now of any bunch in the set—swell and stylish and lively! Oh, the crowd will fall in to her lead

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when she becomes Mrs. T. Ripley. Now, I say, Doctor Prince, you and the—er—medium gentleman come and take supper to-night with Mrs. and Miss Rankin and me. I'd be delighted if you would, now—I would indeed—just for you to see, you know, the improvement in Miss Rankin."

It transpired that Doctor Prince and Professor Adami accepted Mr. Ashburton's invitation. They convened at the hotel in the rooms of the Rankins. From there they were to proceed to the restaurant honoured by Mr. Ashburton's patronage.

When Miss Rankin swept gracefully into the room the professional gentlemen felt fascination and surprise conflicting in their feelings. She was radiant, bewitching, lively to effervescence. Her mother and Mr. Ashburton hung, enraptured,

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upon her looks and words. She was most becomingly clothed in pale blue.

"Oh, bother!" she suddenly exclaimed, most vivaciously, "I don't like this dress, after all. You must all wait," she commanded, with a captivating fling of her train, "until I change." Half an hour later she returned, magnificent in a stunning costume of black lace.

"I'll walk with you downstairs, Professor Adami," she declared, with a charming smile. Half-way down she left his side abruptly and joined Doctor Prince. "You've been such a benefit to me," she said. "It's such a relief to get rid of that horrid feud thing. Heavens! Ripley, did you forget those bonbons? Oh, this horrid black dress! I shouldn't have worn it; it makes me think of funerals. Did you get the scent of those lilacs

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then? It makes me think of the Kentucky mountains. How I wish we were back there."

"Aren't you fond of New York, then?" asked Doctor Prince, regarding her interestedly.

She started at the sound of his voice and looked up vivaciously.

"Indeed I am," she said, earnestly. "I adore New York. Why, I couldn't live without theatres and dances and my daily drives here. Oh, Ripley," she called, over her shoulder, "don't get that bull pup I wanted; I've changed my mind. I want a Pomeranian—now, don't forget."

They arrived on the pavement.

"Oh, a carriage!" exclaimed Miss Rankin; "I don't want a carriage, I want an auto. Send it away!"

"All right," said Ashburton, cheerily, "I thought you said a carriage."

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In obedience to orders the carriage rolled away and an open auto glided up in its place.

"Stuffy, smelly thing!" cried Miss Rankin, with a winsome pout. "We'll walk. Ripley, you and Doctor Prince look out for mamma. Come on, Professor Adami." The indulgent victims of the charming beauty obeyed.

"The dear, dear child!" exclaimed Mrs. Rankin, happily, to Doctor Prince. "How full of spirits and life she is getting to be! She's so much improved from her old self."

"Lots," said Ashburton, proudly and fatuously. "She's picked up the regular metropolitan gaits. *Chic* and swell don't begin to express her. She's cut out the pensive thought business. Up-to-date. Why she changes her mind every two minutes. That's Annabel."

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At the fashionable restaurant where they were soon seated, Doctor Prince found his curiosity and interest engaged by Miss Rankin's behaviour. She was in an agreeably fascinating humour. Her actions were such as might be expected from an adored child whose vacillating whims were indulged by groveling relatives. She ordered article after article from the bill of fare, petulantly countermanding nearly every one when they were set before her. Waiters flew and returned, collided, conciliated, apologized, and danced at her bidding. Her speech was quick and lively, deliciously inconsistent, abounding in contradictions, conflicting statements, "bulls," discrepancies and nonconformities. In short, she seemed to have acquired within the space of a few days all that inconsequent, illogical frothiness

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that passes current among certain circles of fashionable life.

Mr. T. Ripley Ashburton showed a doting appreciation and an addled delight at the new charms of his fiancée—charms that he at once recognized as the legal tender of his set.

Later, when the party had broken up, Doctor Prince and Professor Adami stood, for a moment, at a corner, where their ways were to diverge.

“Well,” said the professor, who was genially softened by the excellent supper and wine, “this time our young lady seems to be more fortunate. The malady has been eradicated completely from her entity. Yes, sir, in good time, our school will be recognized by all.”

Doctor Prince scrutinized the handsome, refined countenance of

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the hypnotist. He saw nothing there to indicate that his own diagnosis was even guessed at by that gentleman.

"As you say," he made answer, "she appears to have recovered, as far as her friends can judge."

When he could spare the time, Doctor Prince again invaded the sanctum of the great Grumbleton Myers, and together they absorbed the poison of nicotine.

"Yes," said the great Myers, when the door was opened and Doctor Prince began to ooze out with the smoke, "I think you have come to the right decision. As long as none of the persons concerned has any suspicion of the truth, and is happy in the present circumstances, I don't think it necessary to inform him that the *feuditis Beallorum et Rankinorum*—how's the Latin, doctor?—has only been driven to Miss Rankin's brain."

THE ELUSIVE TENDERLOIN

THERE is no Tenderloin. There never was. That is, none that you could run a tape-line around. The word really implies a condition or a quality—much as you would say “reprehensibility” or “cold feet.”

Metes and bounds have been assigned to it. I know. Realists have prated of “from Fourteenth to Forty-second,” and “as far west as” etc., but the larger meaning of the word remains with me.

Confirmation of my interpretation of the famous slaughter-house noun-adjective came to me from Bill

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Jeremy, a friend out of the West. Bill lives in a town on the edge of the prairie-dog country. At times Bill yearns to maintain the tradition that "ginger shall be hot i' the mouth." He brought his last yearning to New York. And it devolved upon me. You know what that means.

I took Bill to see the cavity that has been drilled in the city's tooth, soon to be filled with the new gold subway; and the Eden Musee, and the Flatiron and the crack in the front window-pane of Russell Sage's house, and the old man that threw the stone that did it when he was a boy—and I asked Bill what he thought of New York.

"You may mean well," said Bill, with gentle reproach, "but you've got in a groove. You thought I

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was underwear buyer for the Blue-Front Dry Goods Emporium of Pine Knob, N. C., didn't you? Or the junior partner of Slowcoach & Green, of Geegeewocomee, State of Goobers, come on for the fall stock of jeans, lingerie, and whetstones? Don't treat me like a business friend.

"Do you suppose the wild, insensate longing I feel for metropolitan gayety is going to be satisfied by waxworks and razor-back architecture? Now you get out the old envelope with the itinerary on it, and cross out the Brooklyn Bridge and the cab that Morgan rides home in and the remaining objects of interest, for I am going it alone. The Tenderloin, well done, is what I shall admire for to see."

Bill Jeremy has a way of doing as he says he will. So I did not urge

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upon him the bridge, or Carnegie Hall or the great Tomb—wonders that the unselfish New Yorker reserves, unseen, for his friends.

That evening Bill descended, unprotected, upon the Tenderloin. The next day he came and put his feet upon my desk and told me about it.

“This Tenderloin,” said he, “is a cross between a fake sideshow and a footrace. It’s a movable feast—somethin’ like Easter, or tryin’ to eat spaghetti with chopsticks.

“Last night I put all my money but nine dollars under a corner of the carpet and started out. I had along a bill-of-fare of this here Tenderloin; it said it begins at Fourteenth street and runs to Forty-second, with Fourth avenue and Seventh on each side of it. Well, I started up from Fourteenth so I wouldn’t miss any

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of it. Lots of people was travellin' on the streets in a hurry. Thinks I, the Tenderloin's sizzlin' to-night; if I don't hurry I won't get a seat at the performance.

"Most of the crowd seemed to be goin' up and I went up. And then they seemed to be goin' down, and I went down. I asks a man in a light overcoat with a blue jaw leanin' against a lamppost where was this Tenderloin.

"'Up that way,' he says, wavin' his finger-ring.

"'How'll I know it when I get to it?' I asks.

"'Yah!' says he, like he was sick. 'Easy! Youse'll see a flax-headed cull stakin' a doll in a 98-cent shirtwaist to a cheese sandwich and sarsaparilla, and five Salvation Army corporals waitin' round for de change. Dere'll be a phonograph playin' and nine

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cops gettin' ready to raid de joint. Dat'll be it.'

"I asked that fellow where I was then.

"'Two blocks from de Pump,' says he.

"I goes on uptown, and seein' nothin' particular in the line of sinful delight, I strikes 'crosstown to another avenue. That was Sixth, I reckon. People was still walkin' up and down, puttin' first one foot in front and then the other in the irreligious and wicked manner that I suppose has given the Tenderloin its frivolous reputation. Street cars was runnin' past, most impious and unregenerate; and the profligate Dagoes was splittin' chestnuts to roast with a wild abandon that reminded me considerably of doings in Paris, France. The dissipated bootblacks was sleepin' in their chairs, and the

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roast peanut whistles sounded gay and devilish among the mad throng that leaned ag'inst the awnin' posts.

"A fellow with a high hat and brass buttons gets down off the top of his covered sulky, and says to me, 'Keb, sir?'"

"'Whereabouts is this Tenderloin, Colonel?' I asks.

"'You're right in the centre of it, boss,' says he. 'You are standin' right now on the wickedest corner in New York. Not ten feet from here a push-cart man had his pocket picked last night; and if you're here for a week I can show you at least two moonlight trolley parties go by on the New Amsterdam line.'

"'Look here,' says I, 'I'm out for a razoo. I've got nine iron medallions of Liberty wearin' holes in my pocket linin'. I want to split this Tenderloin in two if there's anything in it.

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Now put me on to something that's real degraded and boisterous and sizzling with cultured and uproarious sin. Something in the way of metropolitan vice that I can be proud of when I go back home. Ain't you got any civic pride about you?'

"'This sulky driver scratched the heel of his chin.

"'Just now, boss,' says he, 'everything's layin' low. There's a tip out that Jerome's cigarettes ain't agreein' with him. If it was any other time—say,' says he, like an idea struck him, 'how'd you like to take in the all-night restaurants? Lots of electric lights, boss, and people and fun. Sometimes they laugh right out loud. Out-of-town visitors mostly visit our restaurants.'

"'Get away,' says I, 'I'm beginnin' to think your old Tenderloin is nothin' but the butcher's article. A little

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spice and infamy and audible riot is what I am after. If you can't furnish it go back and climb on your demi-barouche. We have restaurants out West,' I tells him, 'where we eat grub attended by artificial light and laughter. Where is the boasted badness of your unjustly vituperated city?'

"The fellow rubs his chin again. 'Deed if I know, boss,' says he, 'right now. You see Jerome'—and then he buds out with another idea. 'Tell you what,' says he, 'be the very thing! You jump in my keb and I'll drive you over to Brooklyn. My aunt's giving a euchre party to-night,' says he, 'because Miles O'Reilly is busy, watchin' the natatorium—somebody tipped him off it was a pool-room. Can you play euchre? The keb'll be \$3.50 an hour. Jump right in, boss.'

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"That was the best I could do on the wickedest corner in New York. So I walks over where it's more righteous, hopin' there might be somethin' doin' among the Pharisees. Everything, so far as I could see, was as free from guile as a hammock at a Chautauqua picnic. The people just walked up and down, speakin' of chrysanthemum shows and oratorios, and enjoyin' the misbegotten reputation of bein' the wickedest rakes on the continent."

"It's too bad, Bill." I said, "that you were disappointed in the Tenderloin. Didn't you have a chance to spend any of your money?"

"Oh, yes," said Bill. "I managed to drop one dollar over on the edge of the sinful district. I was goin' along down a boulevard when I hears an awful hollerin' and fussin' that sounded good—it reminded me of a

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real enjoyable rough-house out West. Some fellow was quarrelin' at the top of his voice, usin' cuss words, and callin' down all kinds of damnation about somethin'.

"The sounds come out through a big door in a high buildin' and I went in to see the fun. Thinks I, I'll get a small slice of this here Tenderloin anyhow. Well, I went in, and that's where I dropped the dollar. They came around and collected it."

"What was inside, Bill?" I asked.

"A fellow told me, when we come out," said Bill, "it was a church, and one of these preachers that mixes up in politics was denouncin' the evils of the Tenderloin."

THE STRUGGLE OF THE OUTLIERS

A GAIN, to-day, at a certain street, on the ragged boundaries of the city, Lawrence Holcombe stopped the trolley car and got off. Holcombe was a handsome, prosperous business man of forty; a man of high social standing and connections. His comfortable suburban residence was some five miles farther out on the car line from the street where so often of late he had dropped off the outgoing car.

The conductor winked at a regular passenger, and nodded his head archly in the direction of Holcombe's hurrying figure.

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"Getting to be a regular thing," commented the conductor.

Holcombe picked his way gingerly down a roughly graded side street infested with ragged urchins and impeded by abandoned tinware. He stopped at a small cottage fenced in with a patch of stony ground with a few stunted shade-trees growing about it. A stout, middle-aged woman was washing clothes in a tub at one side of the door. She looked around, and smiled a smile of fat recognition.

"Good avening, Mr. Holcombe, is it yerself ag'in? Ye'll find Katie inside, sir."

"Did you speak to her for me?" asked Holcombe, in a low voice; "did you try to help me gain her consent as you promised to do?"

"Sure, and I did that. But, sir, ye know gyurls will be gyurls. The

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more ye coax 'em the wilfuller they gets. 'Tis yer own pleadin' that'll get her if anything will. An' I hopes ye may, for I tells her she'll never get a betther offer than yours, sir. 'Tis a good girl she is, and a tidy hand for anything from the kitchen to the parlour, and she's never a fault except, maybe, a bit too much likin' for dances and ruffles and ribbons, but that's natural to her age and good looks if I do say it meself, bein' her mither, Mr. Holcombe. Ye can spake ag'in to Katie, sir, and maybe this time ye'll have luck unless Danny Conlan, the wild gossoon, has been at it ag'in overpersuadin' her ag'inst ye."

Holcombe turned slightly pale, and his lips closed tightly for a moment.

"I've heard of this fellow Conlan before. Why does he interfere? Why does he stand in the way? Is

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there anything between him and Katie? Does Katie care for him?"

Mrs. Flynn gave a sigh, like a puff of a locomotive, and a flap upon the washboard with a sodden garment that sent Holcombe, well splashed, six feet away.

"Ask me no questions about what's in a gyurl's heart and I'll tell ye no lies. Her own mither can't tell any more than yerself, Mr. Holcombe."

Holcombe stepped inside the cottage. Katie Flynn, with rolled-up sleeves, was ironing a dress of flounced muslin. Criticism of Holcombe's deviation from his own sphere to this star of lower orbit must have waned at the sight of the girl. Her beauty was of the most solvent and convincing sort. Dusky Irish eyes, one great braid of jetty, shining hair, a crimson mouth, dimpling and shaping itself to every mood of its owner,

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a figure strong and graceful, seemingly full of imperishable life and action—Katie Flynn was one to be sought after and striven for.

Holcombe went and stood by her side as she ironed, and watched the lithe play of muscles rolling beneath the satiny skin of her rounded fore-arms.

“Katie,” he said, his voice concealing a certain anxiety beneath a wooing tenderness, “I have come for my answer. It isn’t necessary to repeat what we have talked over so often, but you know how anxious I am to have you. You know my circumstances and position, and that you will have every comfort and every privilege that you could ask for. Say ‘Yes,’ Katie, and I’ll be the luckiest man in this town to-day.”

Kate set her iron down with a metallic click, and leaned her elbows

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upon the ironing board. Her great blue-black eyes went, in their Irish way, from sparkling fun to thoughtful melancholy.

"Oh, Mr. Holcombe, I don't know what to say. I know you'd be kind to me, and give me the best home I could ever expect. I'd like to say 'yes'—indeed I would. I'd about decided to tell you so, but there's Danny—he objects so."

Danny again! Holcombe strode up and down the room impatiently frowning.

"Who is this fellow Conlan, Katie?" he asked. "Every time I nearly get your consent he comes between us. Does he want you to live always in this cottage for the convenience of his mightiness? Why do you listen to him?"

"He wants me," said Katie, in the voice of a small, spoiled child.

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"Well, I want you too," said Holcombe, masterfully. "If I could see this wonderful Mr. Conlan, of the persuasive tongue, I'd argue the matter with him."

"He's been the champion middle-weight fighter of this town," said Katie, a bit mischievously.

"Oh, has he! Well, that doesn't frighten me, Katie. In fact, I am not sure but what I'd tackle him a few rounds myself, with you for the prize; although I'm somewhat rusty with the gloves."

"Whist! there he comes now," exclaimed Katie, her eyes widening a little with apprehension.

Holcombe looked out the door and saw a young man coming up from the gate. He walked with an easy swagger. His face was smooth and truculent, but not bad. He wore a cap pulled down to one eye. He

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walked inside the house and stopped at the door of the room in which stood his rival and the bone of contention.

"You're after my girl again, are you?" he grumbled, huskily and ominously. "I don't like it, do you see? I've told her so, and I tell you so. She stays here. For ten cents I'd knock your block off. Do you see?"

"Now Mr. Conlan," began Holcombe, striving to avoid the *argumentum ad hominem*, "listen to reason. It is only fair to let Katie choose for herself. Is it quite the square thing to try to prevent her from doing what she prefers to do? If it had not been for your interference I would have had her long ago."

"For five cents," pursued the unmoved Mr. Conlan, lowering his terms, "I'd knock your block off."

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Into Holcombe's eye there came the light of desperate resolve. He saw but one way to clear the obstacle from his path.

"I am told," he said quietly and firmly, "that you are a fighter. Your mind seems to dwell upon physical combat as the solution to all questions. Now, Conlan, I'm no scrapper, but I'll fight you to a finish any time within the next three minutes to see who gets the girl. If I win she goes with me. If you win you have your way, and I'll not trouble her again. Are you game?"

Danny Conlan's hard, blue eyes looked a sudden admiration.

"You're all right," he conceded with gruff candour. "I didn't think you was that sort. You're all right. It's a dead fair sporting prop., and I'm your company. I'll stand by the results according to terms. Come

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on, and I'll show you where it can be pulled off. You're all right."

Katie tried to interfere, but Danny silenced her. He led Holcombe down the hill to a deep gully that sheltered them from view. Night was just closing in upon the twilight. They laid aside their coats and hats. Here was a situation in the methodical existence of Lawrence Holcombe, real estate and bond broker, representative business man of unquestionable habits and social position! Fighting with a professional tough in a gully in a squalid settlement for the daughter of an Irish washer-woman!

The combat was a short one. If it had lasted longer, Holcombe would have lost, for both his wind and his science had deteriorated from long lack of training. Therefore, he forced the fighting from the start. It is

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difficult to say to what he owed his victory over the once champion middleweight. One thing in his favour was that Mr. Conlan's nerve and judgment had been somewhat shattered by the effects of a recent spree. Another must have been that Holcombe was stimulated to supreme exertion by an absorbing incentive to win—a prompting more powerful than the instinct of the gladiator, deeper than all the motives of gallantry, and more important than the vital influence of love itself. A third fortuitous adjunct was, without doubt, a chance blow upon the projecting chin of the middleweight, under which that warrior sank to the gully's grime and remained incapable, while Holcombe stood above him and leisurely counted him out. Danny got shakily to his feet, and proved to be a true sport.

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"You're all right," he said. "But if we'd had it by rounds 'twould have ended different. The girl goes with you, do you see? I'm on the square."

They climbed back to the cottage.

"It's settled," announced Holcombe. "Mr. Conlan removes his objections."

"That's straight," said Danny. "He's all right."

Holcombe had only a scratched and slightly reddened chin from a vicious, glancing uppercut from Danny's left. Danny showed punishment. One eye was nearly closed. His lip was bleeding.

Katie was a true woman. Such do not at once crown the victor in the tourney for their favour. Pity comes first. The victor must wait for his own. It will come to him. She flew to the vanquished champion

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and comforted him, ministering to his bruises. Holcombe stood, serene and smiling, without jealousy.

"To-morrow," he said to Katie, with head erect and beaming eyes.

"To-morrow, if you like," answered Katie.

Holcombe minced his precarious way up the ragged hill among the obsolete tinware. His car came along a-glitter with electric lights and jammed with passengers. He jumped to the rear platform and stood there. At his side he found Weatherly, a friend and neighbour, who had also built a house in the suburbs, a few squares from his own.

"Hello, Holcombe," yelled Weatherly, above the crash of the car. "Been looking over some real estate, out here? How're Mrs. Holcombe and the young H's?"

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"First rate," shouted Holcombe, "when I left home this morning. How's the family with you?"

"Only so-so. Usual suburban troubles. Servants won't stay so far out; tradesmen object to delivering goods in the country; cars break down, etc. What's pleasing you so? Made a lucky deal to-day?"

Holcombe's face wore an ecstatic look. He was fingering a little scratch on his chin with one hand. He leaned his head towards Weatherly's ear.

"Say, Bob, do you remember that Irish girl, Katie Flynn, that was with the Spaffords so long a time?"

"I've heard of her," said Weatherly. "They say she stayed a year with them without a single day off. But I don't believe any fairy story like that."

"'Twas a fact. Well, I engaged

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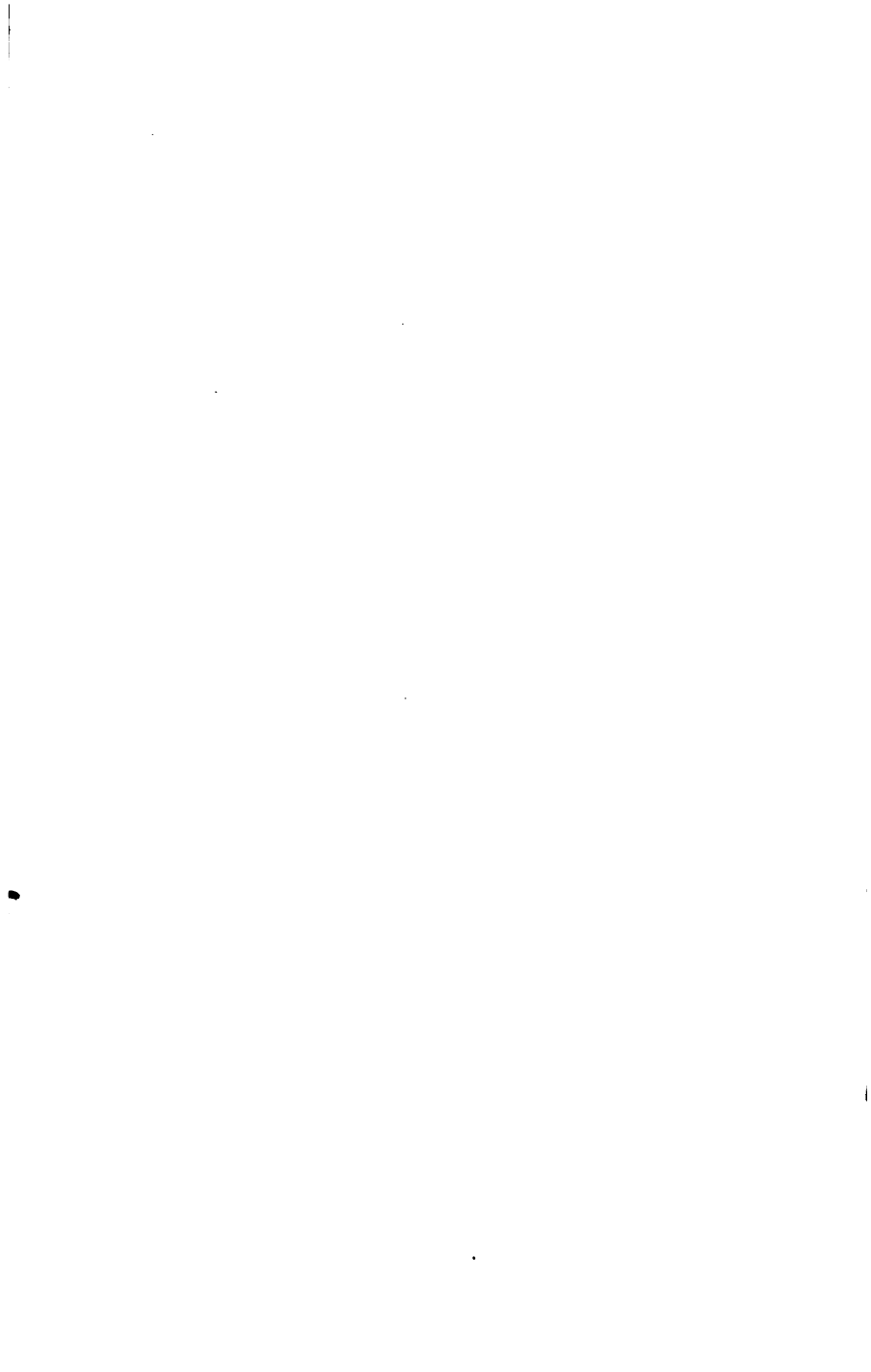
her to-day for a cook. She's going out to the house to-morrow."

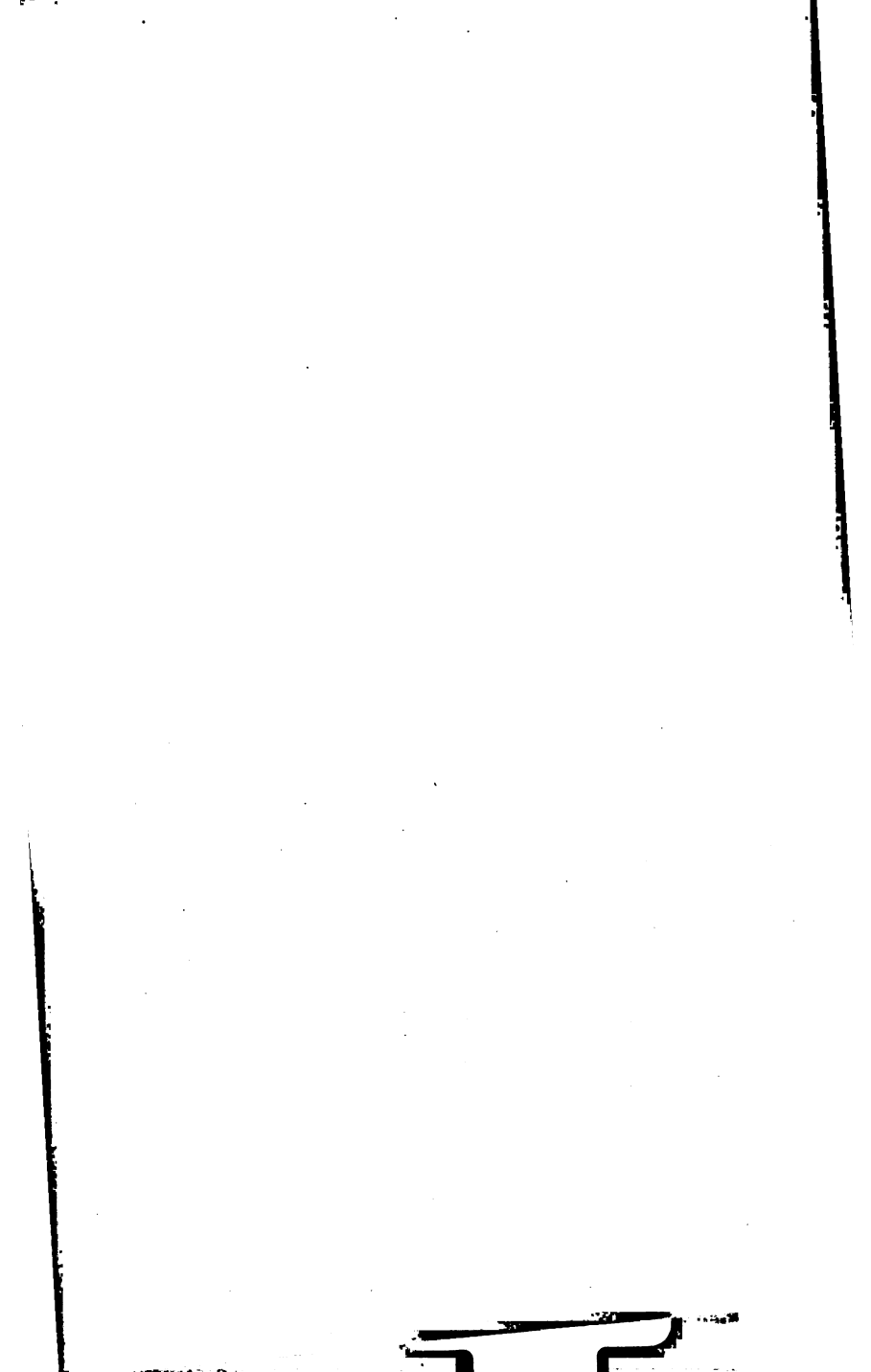
"Confound you for a lucky dog," shouted Weatherly, with envy in his tones and his heart, "and you live four blocks further out than we do!"

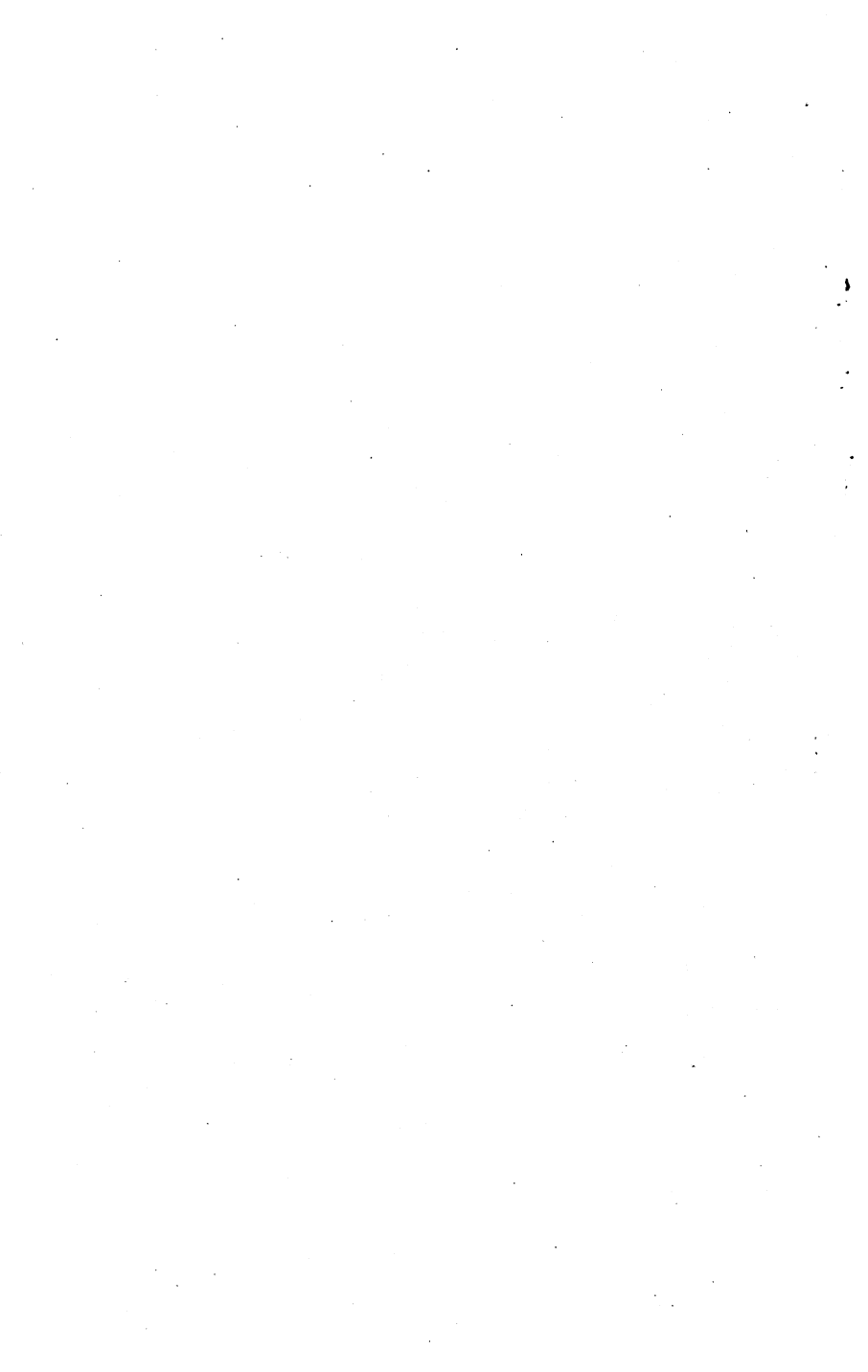
THE END

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